

USS Constitution Sailors Help Feed Those in Need

By Seaman Shannon S. Heavin, USS Constitution Public Affairs

BALTIMORE – Sailors assigned to USS Constitution prepared and served food at the Our Daily Bread Soup Kitchen in Baltimore, Aug. 30.

Navy Counselor 1st Class (SW/AW) Melissa Santiago, Logistics Specialist 2nd Class Stuart Macgillivray, Airman Bryan Pickett, Airman Michael Moore and Airman Tracy Stephens participated in the event as part of Baltimore Navy Week, Aug. 28-Sept. 6.

“I am glad to have had this opportunity,” said Macgillivray. “This shows that military branches are not just here to defend the country, big-picture-wise, but we are here to help in any way we can.”

Sailors from USS Whidbey Island (LSD 41) also participated in serving hot meals, picking stems from green beans and providing waiter-like service for approximately 300 guests, 15-20 percent of whom are homeless.

“It has been great and unusual to have military personnel here,” said Aaron Kennedy, volunteer coordinator. “Not many guests here have an idea about what the Navy is. This brought a new level of understanding to them in a supportive setting.”

Since 2007, Our Daily Soup Kitchen has served an average of 700 meals, seven days a week and 365 days a year to men, women and children of all ages. Our Daily Soup Kitchen not only feeds those who are hungry but also provides shelter and recovery programs leading to employment.

This is the fourth Navy Week Constitution Sailors have participated in this year. They performed similar outreach activities during Des Moines Navy Week, April 19-24, Spokane Navy Week, May 10-15 and Boston Navy Week, June 30-July 5.

“Constitution Sailors are active in community service programs, not only when we are participating in Navy Weeks but year-round in Boston,” said Cmdr. Timothy Cooper, 71st in command of Constitution. “I think community outreach programs provide our Sailors with opportunities to make an immediate positive impact on the lives of people who have fallen into difficulties.”

Baltimore Navy Week is one of 20 Navy Weeks planned across America in 2010. Navy Weeks are designed to show Americans the investment they have made in their Navy, and to increase awareness in cities that do not have a significant Navy presence.

Constitution is located in the Charlestown Navy Yard in Boston. She is the world's oldest commissioned warship afloat and welcomes more than 500,000 visitors a year. For more information on Constitution, visit www.history.navy.mil/ussconstitution or www.facebook.com/ussconstitutionofficial.